



# LAND AT RUXOX HOUSE, MAULDEN ROAD, FLITWICK, BEDFORDSHIRE

## Archaeological Observation, Recording and Reporting

Albion Archaeology Project No: RH 1319

Report No: 2007/124

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### **Introduction**

Mid Bedfordshire District Council has granted planning permission (07/779/FUL) for the change of use from a dwelling to a day nursery at Ruxox House, Maulden Road, Flitwick, Bedfordshire. A planning condition was placed on the associated creation of car-parking spaces to the north and west of Ruxox House, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation.

Bedfordshire County Council's Archaeological Officer (CAO) issued a Brief (BCC 2007) detailing the requirements for an archaeological watching brief during the development. Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Fordfield House Nursery Ltd to prepare a Project Design (Albion Archaeology 2007) and to undertake archaeological observation of the ground-works, the results of which are presented in this report.

The fieldwork was undertaken by David Ingham (Archaeological Project Officer), who also prepared this report; the illustration is by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).

### **Site Location and Description**

The development site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 0435 3610, lying within the valley of the River Flit, and covers an area of *c.* 1870m<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 1). The underlying geology is of the Flitwick Association — gleyed brown earth and Lower Greensand over Jurassic clays — with an average height of 66m OD.

### **Archaeological Background**

The development site lies within an archaeologically sensitive area. The nearby moated site of Ruxox Farm is the centre of an extensive area of late Iron Age and Roman settlement (Luke 1999). Sporadic archaeological investigations since the 1950s have identified burials, enclosures, buildings, ovens, pits, ditches and possible roads.

### **Project Methodology**

Methods employed during the project complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (1999), English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991), and Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual* (2001).

### **Works Description and Results**

Ground-works for the creation of car-parking spaces began on 11th December 2007, using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. The ground-works comprised the removal of topsoil to a maximum depth of 0.2m (Figs 1 and 2). The upper horizon of



the underlying subsoil was exposed sporadically, but no archaeological features were revealed.

The ground-works were initially carried out under constant archaeological supervision. However, the shallowness of the ground reduction meant that no significant archaeological features or deposits were likely to be exposed, and agreement was reached with the CAO that further archaeological supervision of the ground-works was unnecessary.

A copy of this report and the project archive will be deposited with Luton Museum.

### **Conclusion**

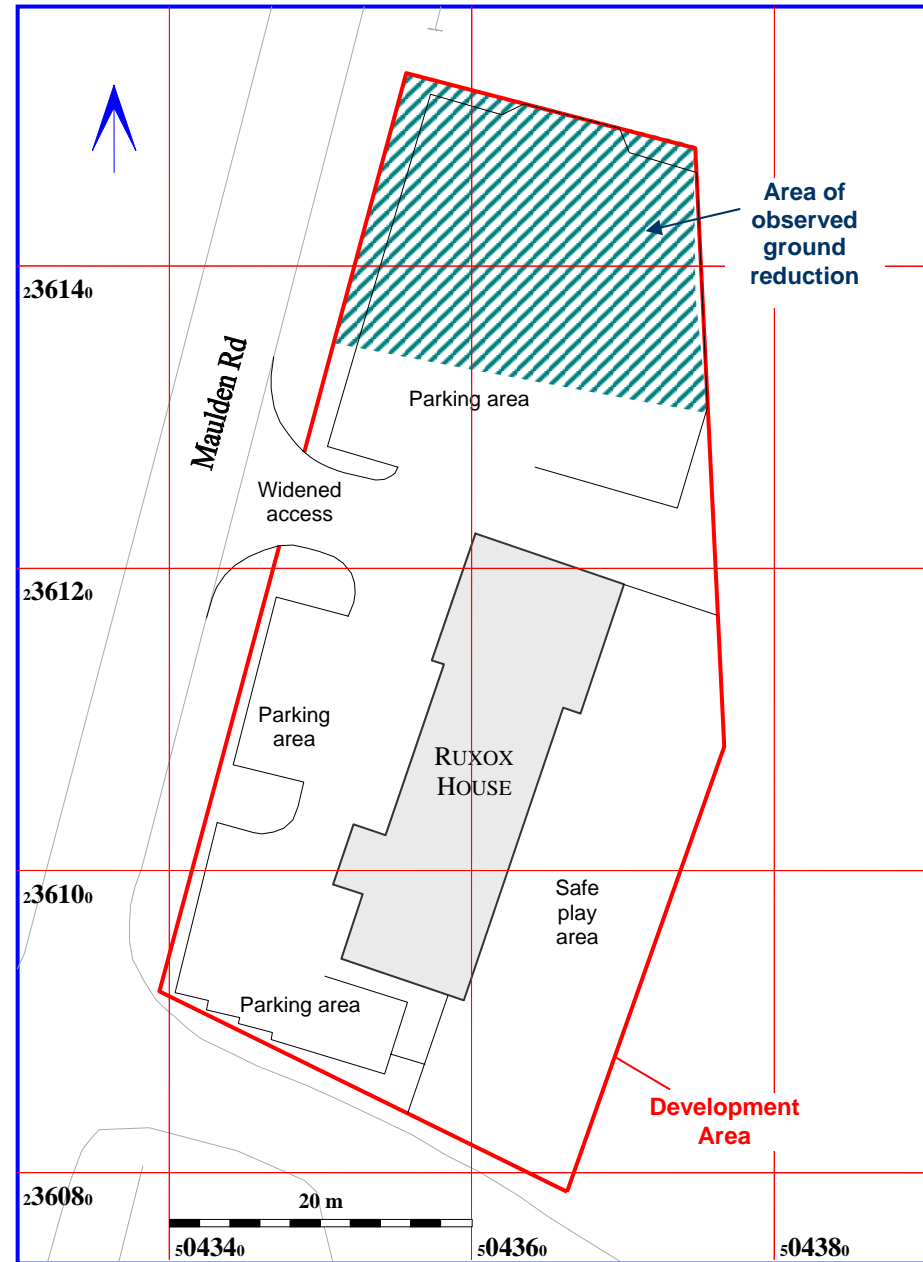
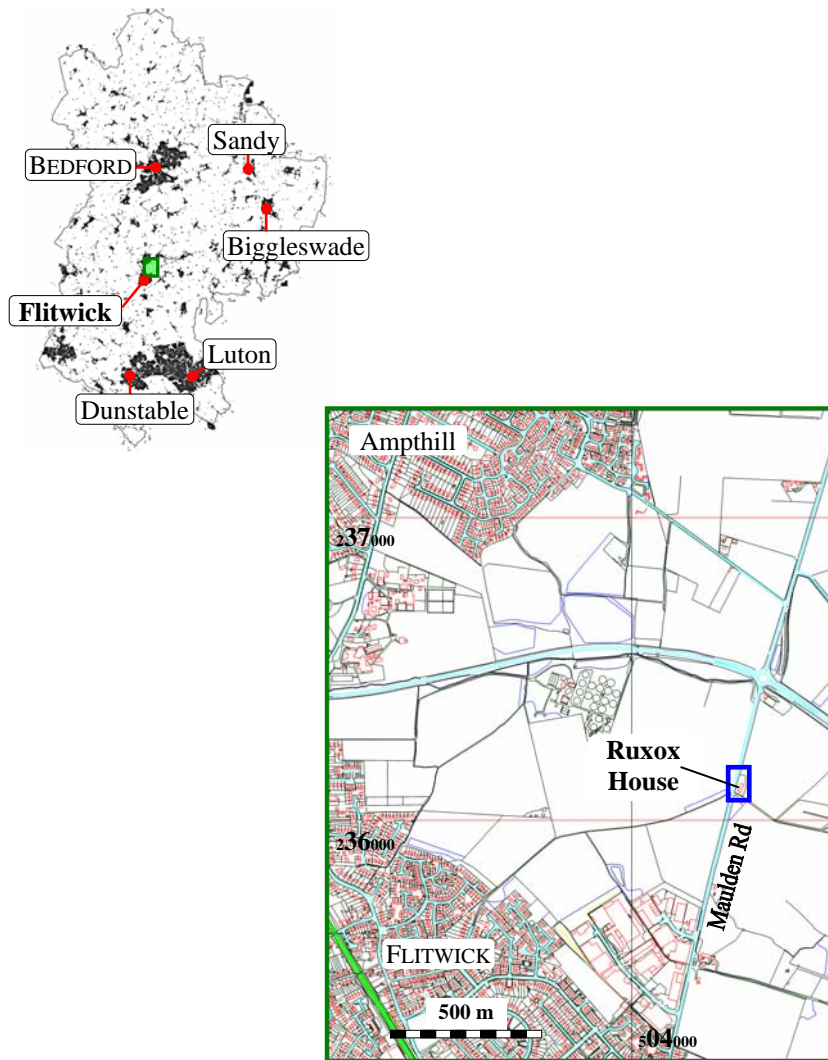
No features or deposits of archaeological significance were revealed during the course of the development. The shallow nature of the ground-works means that any archaeological remains that may exist within the development site have been preserved *in situ* beneath the development.

### **Bibliography**

Albion Archaeology, 2007, *Project Design for Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*

Bedfordshire County Council, 2007, *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Land at Ruxox House, Maulden Road, Flitwick, Bedfordshire*

Luke, M., 1999, 'An enclosed, pre-'Belgic' Iron Age farmstead with later occupation at Hinksley Road, Flitwick', *Bedfordshire Archaeology* 23, 43–88



**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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**Figure 2:** Northern end of site during ground-works